

DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Blotter: May 6-12

Reminder for the week: Paddle boards are vessels too – and boating regulations apply

DOVER – To achieve public compliance with laws and regulations through education and enforcement actions that help conserve Delaware's fish and wildlife resources and ensure safe boating and public safety, DNREC's Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers between May 6-12 made 2,183 contacts with anglers, boaters, hunters, and the general public, issuing 26 citations. Officers responded to 39 complaints regarding possible violations of laws and regulations or requests to assist the public. A Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police presence continued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area and Michael N. Castle Trail.

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police in the Community

- On May 11, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers discussed the role of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers, answered questions regarding hunting, fishing and boating, and displayed the Operation Game Theft trailer during the annual Casting with Cops event at Glasgow Park in Newark.

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Actions

Citations issued by category, with the number of charges in parentheses, included:

Wildlife Conservation: Possession of unlawfully taken antlered deer (1).

Fisheries Conservation: Possession of undersized white perch (16), no Fisherman Information Network (FIN) number (1), unlicensed fishing (3)*, and possession of over-the-limit crab pots (1).

Boating & Boating Safety: Operating a vessel with insufficient number of life jackets (1).

Public Safety: Possession of marijuana – civil (2).

Other: Operating a motor vehicle off an established roadway on a state wildlife area (1)*.

**Includes citation(s) issued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area.*

DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes and thanks the majority of anglers, boaters, and hunters who comply with and support Delaware's fishing, hunting, and boating laws and regulations. Citizens are encouraged to report fish, boating, and wildlife violations to the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police by calling 302-739-4580 or through the DENRP Tip app on a smartphone, which can be downloaded free of charge by searching "DENRP Tip" via the Google Play Store or the iTunes App Store. Wildlife violations may also be reported anonymously to Operation Game Theft by calling 800-292-3030, going online to <http://de.gov/ogt>, or using the DENRP Tip app. Verizon customers can connect to Operation Game Theft directly by dialing #OGT.

Are you AWARE?

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police remind stand up paddle boarders to review Delaware's boating laws and regulations and how they apply to paddle boards before heading out on the waterways. In recent years, the sport of stand up paddle boarding has grown in popularity, with stand up paddle

boarders often seen on many of Delaware's waterways throughout the summertime.

The United States Coast Guard and the state of Delaware recognize a paddle board as a vessel when it is operated outside the confines of a surfing or swimming area. Therefore, many of the same requirements for personal flotation devices, visual distress signals, sound producing devices, and the use of a navigational light between sunset and sunrise apply when paddle boards are operated in Delaware waters.

A paddle board must meet the following safety equipment requirements when operated in Delaware waters:

- All paddle boarders must have a United States Coast Guard-approved life jacket on board.
- Any child age 12 and younger must wear a USCG-approved life jacket at all times while on a paddle board.
- Paddle boarders must carry a whistle or horn, or some other sounding device capable of making an efficient sound signal.
- When operating between the hours of sunset and sunrise, paddle boarders must carry a visual distress signal – an electric distress light or flares – suitable for night use. This applies to all boards operated on coastal waters and directly-connected waters (bays, sounds, harbors, rivers, inlets, etc.) which are two miles wide or wider.
- When operating between the hours of sunset and sunrise, a paddle boarder also must have an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light ready at hand for use as a navigation light, which must be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision.

For more information on safe boating practices in Delaware, including more details on life jackets and other safety equipment, please visit www.de.gov/boatsafety.

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<https://www.facebook.com/DEFWNRPolice/>.*

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Contact: Sgt. Brooke Mitchell, 302-382-7167, or Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police, 302-739-9913